



November 2012



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

Subscribe to Town News



**Receive Important Town
Notices and Information**

[www.westfordma.gov/
subscriber](http://www.westfordma.gov/subscriber)

**Proper retirement of a
worn flag.**

Page 2.

**Receive CodeRED
Emergency Notices**



Page 3.

**Upcoming Senior Center
Events**

Page 4.

**Holiday Food Safety Tips
Health Department News**

Page 6-7.

**Hurricane Sandy
Response**

Page 10-11.

Watch Meetings Online

westford
CAT

www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford Residents,

On October 29th we experienced the impact of Hurricane Sandy, when strong winds and rain swept through our town. Many trees and power lines were knocked over, and about 2,200 of our residents lost power. Board of Selectman Chairmen, Kelly Ross, declared a State of Emergency at the height of the storm. Our Local Emergency Planning Committee, which includes: Joe Targ and Tim Whitcomb, Emergency Management Directors; Fire Chief Rich Rochon; Police Chief Tom McEnaney; Deputy Police Chief Walter Shea; Highway Superintendent Chip Barrett; Sandy Collins, Health Director; Joanne Sheehan, COA Director; Mike Wells, IT Director; Bill Olsen, School Superintendent; Chris Coutu, GIS Coordinator; Assistant Town Manager John Mangiaratti; and myself met many times over the weekend prior to ensure that our town staff were adequately prepared. I would like to thank these department heads, along with their staff, for their exceptional service to our town – both in helping us prepare for this storm, and for their extraordinary efforts during the storm. Our police, fire, and highway employees put themselves in harm's way to take care of others who found themselves in need of our services.

I am displeased to report that the response from National Grid was not improved from the snowstorm of October 2011. Although our town's damage was limited, many residents were without power for up to 5 days. I am working with the Attorney General's office on our continued dissatisfaction with National Grid's response to our power outages, and will keep you posted as to the outcome. There is an online form available if you would like to provide input or suggestions regarding either the town's or National Grid's response to the storm at the following link: [Comments on Storm](#).

Restaurants and stores in the new Cornerstone Square park have begun opening, including: Kiwi Yogurt, Panera Bread, Five Guys, Burton's Grill, to name a few. Market Basket is scheduled to open December 1st. Petco may be opening next, with HomeGoods and Marshalls/TJMaxx set to open in April.

Thank you to Terry Stader, Veteran's Agent, for coordinating our town-wide Veteran's Day events on our Town Common. A special thank you to our State Senator, Eileen Donoghue, State Representative Jim Arciero, our Board of Selectmen, and all other local officials and groups for honoring those who have served and are currently serving our country.

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting on November 27th, 2012, I will present the town-wide budget for Fiscal Year 2014. All materials will be available on our website prior to the meeting. At that same meeting, we will also be hearing a recommendation from our Recycling Commission to adopt a policy for mandatory recycling enforcement, we will hear a report from the Pedestrian Safety Committee with a recommendation for new sidewalks to be installed, our Economic Development Committee will present their work plan to the board, and Terry Stader will ask to establish a veteran's tax work program.

Please accept my best wishes to you and your loved ones for a very happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Jodi Ross

Department of Veterans Services

US flags removed from veterans' graves the week of November 12

Flags on veterans' graves will be retired after Veteran's Day and replaced prior to Memorial Day. The veteran marker/flag holder will remain on the grave site. Veteran's organizations will be removing flags starting on November 12, 2012. The in-ground stone/metal markers are provided at no cost by the US Department of Veterans Affairs. Please report any missed grave markers or flag holders by calling 978-392-1170.



Proper Disposal of the American Flag



Here in Westford, American Legion Post 437 has an annual "flag retirement" service on Flag Day, June 14th, each year. There are various collection points throughout the town where a resident can drop off flags that are no longer suitable for displaying:

- A local Cub Scout Pack has made containers that are located in the Westford US Post Office locations in Nab, Forge Village and the main post office on Littleton Rd.
- The entrance lobby of American Legion Post 437, 114 Dunstable Rd., flag collection container.
- The Veterans Services department office located in the Millennium Building at Door 9, leave with the staff or leave in the lobby.

The US Flag Code. TITLE 4 > CHAPTER 1 > Sec. 8(k) states:

"The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning."

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact this office at (978) 392-1170 or via email veterans@westfordma.gov

J.V. Fletcher Library News

Restoring a Sense of Normalcy

Power Outages are not novel during winter storms. During these times families often come to the Fletcher Library in search of, as one patron recently put it, "a sense of normalcy." Rooms are warm and well-lit; Adults can sink into comfy chairs and read magazines; weather-weary parents finally relax as they watch their children play with trains, read books in bean bag chairs, or scamper up to them to have a Picture Book read aloud. Library "loans" are apparent everywhere: staff office power strips are strewn about for patrons to recharge every conceivable device; circulating laptops, public computers are privately owned smart devices are ubiquitous; small groups, families, friends and students gather to work, chat, or enjoy a chance meeting. Hot coffee, tea and cocoa from the Friends' sponsored Aesop's Tables Café warms hands and hearts in every library Department. To look around the Fletcher Library in these times is to see a line taken from the Library's Mission Statement and acted out in living color:



"The Library provides a gathering place for community members – in all their diversity – to meet in social engagement, to share discourse, to ponder divergent ideas and to engage in civic connection.....in a warm and welcoming public setting!"

Public Safety

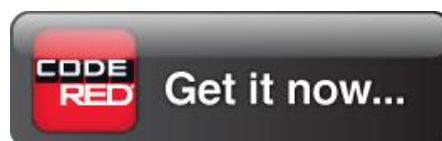


CodeRED is a Community Messaging System, used to notify residences of emergency, non-emergency and general information through an automated telephone dialing system, which sends a message automatically to thousands of targeted residences and/or contact databases.

Most residents will not need to take action in order to receive notification of events on their home telephone. However, if you have recently moved into Westford, changed your home phone number, or have an unlisted phone number you will need to register your phone number. If you had previously registered in the CityWatch system you do not need to register again in CodeRED.

[Click here](#) to register additional phone numbers or email addresses.

Click the icon below to download the CodeRED Mobile Alert App for your smartphone.



Council on Aging News

Upcoming Events

Holiday Basket donations for Thanksgiving and Christmas please call Cameron Center for an application at 978 399-2330 - weekdays

T'AI CHI starts Monday Nov. 19th at Cameron call 978 692-5523 for more information.

Food Pantry located at 20 Pleasant St. Mon. Nov. 19th 1 – 3 PM, Wednesday Nov. 28th 8:30 – 11:30 AM, Thursday Nov. 15th 8:30 – 11:30 AM and 6 – 8 PM, Fri. Nov. 16th 8:30 – 11:30 AM

Holiday Luncheon of Roast Pork for Westford Seniors at Franco American Club, December 4, 11:00 AM seating. Call 978 692-5523. Fee \$7.

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT ends on December 7th. Call for a SHINE appointment at 978 692-5523 or 1 800-MEDICARE

Trip to "Christmas Time" at the Reagle Theatre with dinner to follow at the Chateau Restaurant in Waltham. Fee \$83. Motor coach departs the Franco, Sunday Dec. 9th at 11 A.M. Call 978 692-5523.

BUCKET BRIGADE

If you are a senior in need of a FREE bucket of sand to be dropped off at your home prior to the winter, please call the Cameron Desk The Westford Police Association will be distributing around mid-November.

FUEL ASSISTANCE

Call for an application at 978 692-5523. Maximum gross income household size 1 is \$31,271; 2 is \$40,893; 3 is \$50,515; and 4 is \$60,137.

Board of Health Clinic: Hearing/Hearing Aid Screenings -
On November 19, 2012 and January 14, 2013 from 9:30 - 11:30 AM.
Location: Cameron Senior Center. Appointments only. Call 978-692-5509 to book.

To see the entire COA newsletter
please visit our web-site at
www.westfordma.gov/coa, and click on
[COA Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center

Recreation Department News

Westford-Littleton Crew wins Gold at MPSRA Fall State Championships

Westford-Littleton Crew participated in the Mass Public School Rowing Association's Fall State Championships held in Harwich on October 28. The entire team put in their best effort, which paid off in medals for many of the team members.

In Varsity, the Boys Varsity 4+ won gold in their race against teams from Arlington-Belmont, Wayland-Weston, and Worcester. Rowing in the boat were Ben Davis, Gary Flynn, Peter Cajolet, and Jeremy Hemingway. Haley Doucette sat in the coxswain seat.

The Boys Junior Varsity 4+ race has two entries from Westford-Littleton. These boats won first and third place. The first place boat was coxed by Marissa Cuggino. Rowers were Alex Corvino, Jimmy Cummings, Dino Ferrini and Matt Davis. The third place rowers were Greg Sergeant, Dan Makuch, Jacob Clancy, and Alex Casperson. Srarya Chary sat in the coxswain seat.

The Girls Junior Varsity 4 won gold in their race. Rowers were Naomi Moran, Nina Fultz, Lexi Gordon and Janine Thibodeau. Sarah Berkowitz sat in the coxswain seat. The Girls Varsity 4+ won third place in their race. Rowers were Ginny Ross, Amelia Shein, Sophie Anderson and Lauren Smith. Riann Hale coxed the boat.

Novice boats also performed well. The Boys Novice 8+ won gold in their race against teams from Wayland-Weston, Hingham, and Arlington-Belmont. Rowers in this boat were Richard Proulx, R. Chen, Prateek Makhija, Saif Ali Khan, Sean Clancy, Cody Grim, Aaron LaBarre, and Taiga Kambara. Esther Coleman sat in the coxswain seat.

The Girls Novice 8+ won gold in their race. Rowers were Kaitlin Andry, Amanda Tobin, Dana Coggio, Caroline Provost, Maddie Russell, Christine Raymond, Kelsey Anderson and Katherine Stokes. Molly Ryan sat in the coxswain seat.

This was the final fall season regatta for Westford-Littleton Crew. The team will continue with winter training to prepare for the spring season sprint races.



Photo Courtesy of WickedLocal.com

Health Department News

It's the holidays! Time for turkey dinners and decking the halls with boughs of holly. This season of goodwill and giving thanks is also a festive celebration of food. With so many delightful foods to choose from, it's important to keep holiday treats safe from bacteria. Join in the festivities and ensure a safe holiday feasting season for you, your family, and your friends by following these food safety tips.

The Invisible Enemy

- You can't see, taste, or smell bacteria, but it can be on food and multiply rapidly in moist, warm conditions. If consumed, harmful bacteria can cause foodborne illness.
- Be cautious of eggs! Around the holidays, people eat a variety of foods, some of which may contain uncooked or lightly-cooked eggs. But even grade A eggs with clean, uncracked shells can be contaminated with *Salmonella* Enteritidis bacteria. That's why it's important to cook eggs thoroughly to kill any bacteria that may be present.



Safe Turkey Tips

Separate Foods - Don't cross-contaminate

- Place the turkey below other foods in your refrigerator in order to prevent other foods from becoming contaminated with juices from the turkey.
- Use a separate cutting boards for cooked foods and raw foods.
- Never put the cooked turkey on the unwashed plate that previously held the uncooked turkey.

Clean your hands and food surfaces often

- Wash your hands with hot soapy water before you touch the turkey and after you use the bathroom, change diapers, and play with pets.
- Wash all cutting boards, dishes, kitchen tools and counter tops with hot soapy water after you finish fixing the turkey.

Cook foods to safe temperatures

- Cook the turkey thoroughly. Use a food thermometer to check for doneness.
- Cook whole turkey unstuffed (or dark meat only) to 180°F
- Cook a turkey breast to 170°F

Chill foods promptly

- It is best to thaw the turkey in the refrigerator, NOT at room temperature.

Thaw a whole turkey in the refrigerator

- 8 to 12 pounds - 1 to 2 days
- 12 to 16 pounds - 2 to 3 days
- 16 to 20 pounds - 3 to 4 days
- 20 to 24 pounds - 4 to 5 days

In a pinch you can also thaw the turkey in cold water. Cook the thawed turkey immediately

- Put prepared foods and leftover turkey in the refrigerator within two hours.
- Split large amounts of leftovers into small bowls and cool them in the refrigerator.



Health Department - Holiday Food Safety Tips



- Wash hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling any food.
- Wash food-contact surfaces (cutting boards, dishes, utensils, countertops) with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables thoroughly under cool running water and use a produce brush to remove surface dirt.
- Do not rinse raw meat and poultry before cooking in order to avoid spreading bacteria to areas around the sink and countertops.



- When shopping in the store, storing food in the refrigerator at home, or preparing meals, keep foods that won't be cooked separate from raw eggs, meat, poultry or seafood—and from kitchen utensils used for those products.
- Consider using one cutting board only for foods that will be cooked (such as raw meat, poultry, and seafood) and another one for those that will not (such as raw fruits and vegetables).
- Do not put cooked meat or other food that is ready to eat on an unwashed plate that has held any raw eggs, meat, poultry, seafood, or their juices.



- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat, poultry, and fish are cooked to a safe internal temperature. To check a turkey for safety, insert a food thermometer into the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. The turkey is safe when the temperature reaches 165°F. If the turkey is stuffed, the temperature of the stuffing should be 165°F.
- Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating.
- Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm. When making your own eggnog or other recipe calling for raw eggs, use pasteurized shell eggs, liquid or frozen pasteurized egg products, or powdered egg whites.
- Don't eat uncooked cookie dough, which may contain raw eggs.



- Refrigerate leftovers and takeout foods—and any type of food that should be refrigerated, including pie—within two hours.
- Set your refrigerator at or below 40°F and the freezer at 0°F. Check both periodically with an appliance thermometer.
- Thaw frozen food safely in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave—never at room temperature. Cook food thawed in cold water or in the microwave immediately.
- Allow enough time to properly thaw food. For example, a 20-pound turkey needs four to five days to thaw completely in the refrigerator.
- Don't taste food that looks or smells questionable. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Leftovers should be used within three to four days, unless frozen.



KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFER FROM FOOD POISONING
Check your steps at FoodSafety.gov



Water Department News

Fire Hydrant Inspection and Water Distribution System Preventative Maintenance Program

The Westford Water Department (Water Department) operates two water treatment plants and two booster stations that supply water to the low and high service water distribution zones of town. These two zones combined contain 1,020 fire hydrants. The Water Department is solely responsible for the inspection, testing, and maintenance of these fire hydrants. As recommended by the American Water Works Association, the Water Department routinely inspects its hydrants twice a year. These visual inspections occur in the spring and the fall, during the seasonal installation and removal of hydrant snow flags. During a visual inspection, operators are required to:

- Make sure the hydrant is accessible, has adequate ground clearance, and is facing the correct direction.
- Remove exterior obstructions that could interfere with emergency access.
- Inspect for leakage.
- Remove nozzle caps and inspect nozzle and cap threads.
- Check barrel for cracks and standing water. Drain barrel of standing water if required.
- Replace nozzle caps until they are hand tight and then tighten slightly with a wrench.
- Inspect the operating nut.
- Cover damaged or inoperable hydrants with an "Out of Service" bag and notify the Water Superintendent and Fire Department of hydrant status.



In addition to fire hydrant inspections, fire hydrants are tested annually as part of the Water Department's unidirectional flushing program. Unidirectional flushing is a systematic method of closing gate valves and opening fire hydrants to flow large quantities of water at a high velocity in one direction through isolated sections of the distribution system. The goal of flushing is draw clean water through hydrants at a rate high enough to scour sediment, mineral deposits, and biofilm from the interior walls of a pipe. Sediment, mineral deposits, and biofilm have adverse effects on water quality and hydraulic capacity. They can reduce chlorine disinfectant residuals, create objectionable tastes and odors, harbor bacteria, reduce the effective interior diameter of a pipe, slow the velocity of water, contribute to the buildup of scale, and enhance corrosion. Flushing is a necessary preventative maintenance function that not only improves water quality, prolongs pipe life, reduces pumping costs, and improves hydraulics but helps to identify problems in the distribution system such as partially closed valves and malfunctioning fire hydrants.

(continued on next page)

Water Department News (Continued)

In a given year, the Water Department operates approximately 60% of its fire hydrants through the flushing program. The department typically flushes half of the system in the spring and the other half in the fall, subject to water quality and available supply. Though the preference would be to flush every hydrant, the reality is that there are areas where every other or every third hydrant is flushed. The reason for this is to minimize impacts on traffic, provide a safe work zone for our operators, prevent damage to landscaping and road infrastructure, avoid sensitive environmental areas, and avoid areas with inadequate drainage. To address this, it has become a goal of the Water Department to expand its flushing program to include a hydrant and gate valve exercising program. The idea is to, at a minimum; manually or mechanically operate every hydrant and critical gate valve in the system annually to ensure its functionality and reliable operation. Hydrant exercising would include a "wet" inspection which would be performed by fully opening a hydrant and charging it with system pressure to check for leaks and valve functionality. Then upon closing of the hydrant, the nozzle cap would be removed to verify proper drainage of the barrel. Gate exercising would ensure that critical gate valves in the system are clear of debris and can be operated to the fully open and fully closed position without leakage.

Finally, the Water Department routinely maintains hydrants through our hydrant preventative maintenance program. The department employs 2-3 seasonal employees each year to assist with the painting and lubrication of fire hydrants. Hydrants are painted to enhance their visibility to the Fire Department during an emergency and prevent corrosion. In addition to painting, all nozzle caps are removed and the threads of the nozzle and the cap are wire brushed and lubricated. The operating nut is lubricated and brush is removed from around the hydrant. Unlike many communities, the Water Department is also solely responsible for snow removal around hydrants. Despite assistance from responsible residents and business owners, in years of heavy snowfall, this is a very time consuming, labor intense, and costly task for the Water Department. Timely snow removal from around fire hydrants is something the department is constantly looking to improve upon. Additional equipment, assistance from other town departments, and the hiring of private snow removal contractors are all being considered as potential options.

Though we are confident that our fire hydrants and critical water infrastructure are well maintained, we are committed to finding ways to improve all aspects of our preventative maintenance programs. Recently, we invested in water system related preventative maintenance software to assist us with monitoring hydrant inspections, tracking of repair part inventories, scheduling and reporting of routine maintenance, and budgeting for hydrant repair and replacement. As a water system that dates back to the early 1900's, there is a great deal of water infrastructure, including fire hydrants, rapidly approaching the end of its useful life. Aging fire hydrants are often replaced as part of Water Department capital improvement projects, however there are an additional 39 hydrants that we have identified as needing to be replaced independent of the currently scheduled projects. Starting in FY14, we have budgeted \$25,000 to address the replacement of those inadequate and aging fire hydrants. We plan on replacing 5-6 hydrants each year until all the hydrants in the system meet the recommended American Water Works Association specifications.

Hurricane Sandy Response



Damage Assessment of Hurricane Sandy

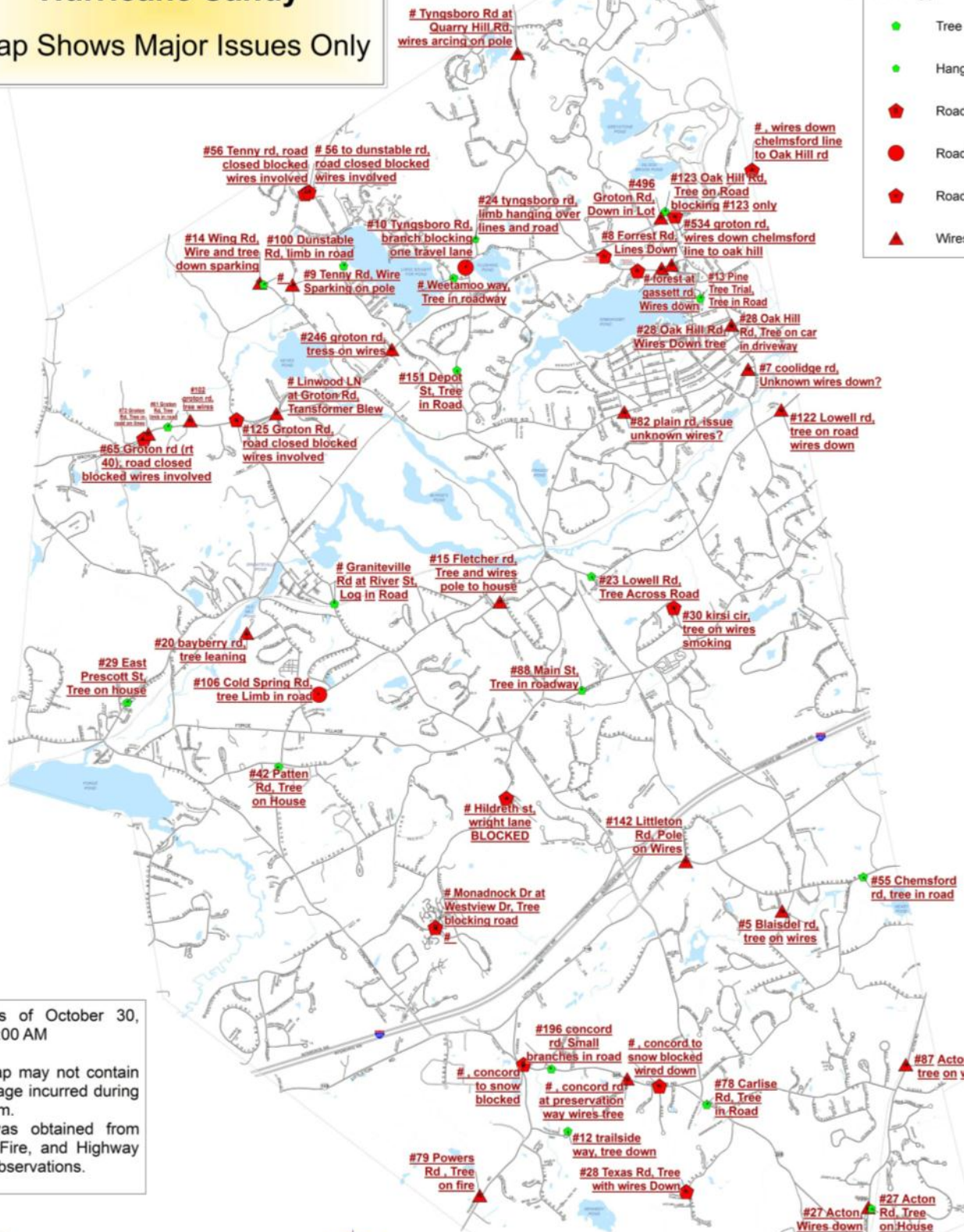
Map Shows Major Issues Only

Legend

Hurricane Sandy

Issue Type

- Tree Issue
- Hanging Branch
- ★ Road Blocked
- Road Partial Blocked
- ★ Road Blocked Wires
- ▲ Wires Down



Data as of October 30, 2012, 9:00 AM

This map may not contain all damage incurred during the storm.

Data was obtained from Police, Fire, and Highway visual observations.



**Town of Westford
Massachusetts**

Date: 11/16/2012



WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV